

IOWA OUTDOORS

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

www.iowadnr.gov

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EXTENDED SHOTGUN SEASON ADDS TO DOE HARVEST

DES MOINES – Despite poor weather during the shotgun season extension, hunters got out and shot more than 5,000 deer, of which more than 90 percent were antlerless. Of those antlerless deer, around 3,600 were does.

The extended season was intended to increase the doe harvest by allowing unfilled tags from either shotgun season to be filled with antlerless deer from Dec. 21 to 23. Prior to the extended season, the doe harvest was 7,500 below estimates. The extension halved the doe harvest deficit.

“It was not as successful as we had hoped, but was a big step forward to catching us up on our doe harvest,” said Willie Suchy, wildlife research supervisor for the DNR.

There are still plenty of antlerless only tags for the remaining seasons. The late muzzleloader season runs through Jan. 13 and there are nearly 20,000 licenses remaining in 25 different counties. These are the counties where the DNR wants to have the deer herd thinned.

There are more than 13,000 licenses remaining for the January antlerless only season across Iowa’s southern two tiers of counties. The DNR has allowed center fire rifles as a selection for this entire season. All the information is on the DNR website. Go to www.iowadnr.gov then click on Hunting and Wildlife, then on Availability of Limited Quota Licenses toward the bottom of the navigation bar on the left.

Bucks have been dropping their antlers since the end of November. To maximize the doe harvest during these antlerless only seasons, hunters should look for deer that are

part of a group, or a deer that has a sleeker frame. A doe often has fawns with it, and a buck almost never. A buck will have a square top of the head where the antlers were.

“If you have any doubt if it is a buck or doe, one way to improve your chance of taking a doe is to not shoot a deer standing by itself,” Suchy said.

Nonresidents have about 300 holiday licenses remaining for antlerless deer in 25 counties. Those nonresident holiday antlerless only licenses cost \$55 in addition to a small game license and a habitat fee, and are valid through Jan. 2, 2008.

Suchy said enough antlerless deer hunting opportunities exist and the DNR is not looking at any further extensions this year.

For more information, contact Tom Litchfield at 641-774-2958.

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BIG CREEK AREA TARGET SHOOTERS ENCOURAGED TO USE OLOFSON RANGE

POLK CITY - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will require all target shooting at the Big Creek wildlife unit to take place at the Charles “Butch” Olofson Shooting Range. Previously, target shooting was allowed in the parking area of the wildlife unit. The change is effective immediately.

“The Big Creek wildlife unit is unique because it supports various types of recreation and is near a large and growing population area,” said Ben Berka, shooting sports coordinator for the Iowa DNR. He said “No Target Shooting” signs will be posed at all parking and access areas for safety reasons.

“We want to make sure everyone can enjoy this area safely. Target shooting in parking or access areas around the wildlife unit could pose a risk to other users and to nearby residents, since safety features, like adequate backstops and safe shot-fall zones, do not exist,” Berka said.

However, target shooters at the Big Creek Area need not go far to sight in or practice their marksmanship skills.

In addition to all necessary safety features, the Olofson Shooting Range at Big Creek offers many other amenities. There are two 50 yard ranges and one 100 yard range for rifle and handgun shooters. Shotgun shooters will enjoy the trap and skeet field and archers will soon be able to practice at the new archery range (renovations complete by June).

Shooters must check in at the range office pay a small fee to use the facility, however the range is supervised at all times to ensure the safety of all shooters. In addition, the range frequently offers many shooting, firearm and hunter education courses. Current range hours are Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, Noon to dark and Saturday and Sunday, 8 a.m. to dark. The range is closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

For more information on the Olofson Shooting Range call 515-795-2067 or visit www.olofsonrange.com.

For more information on the changes for target shooters at big creek, contact Ben Berka at 515-281-0140 or Ben.Berka@dnr.iowa.gov

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STATE PRESERVES BOARD TO MEET JAN. 18 IN DES MOINES

DES MOINES – The State Preserves Advisory Board will meet at 10 a.m., Jan. 18, in the fifth floor conference room, Wallace State Office Bldg., in Des Moines. The meeting is open to the public.

Members of the State Preserves Advisory Board are Deborah Lewis, Carl Kurtz, Gail Brown, Scott Moats, Armando Rosales, Cynthia Peterson and Liz Christiansen, deputy director of the DNR

A more detailed agenda is available on the Iowa DNR's website www.iowadnr.gov under State Parks / Preserves, then click on Preserves Advisory Board link.

The following is the meeting agenda.

- Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes of October Meeting
- Requests for Proposals Fiscal Year 2009
- Final Environmental Impact Study for Highway 100 Extension
- Proposed Bicycle Trail at Starr's Cave Preserve
- Proposed Bicycle Trail at Lamson Woods Preserve
- Vincent Bluff Management Plan
- Hartman Bluff
- Cedar Island
- Preserve Updates
 - Glenwood Resource Center
 - Eureka Woods
 - Hanging Bog

- Silver Lake Fen
- Woodland Mounds
- Open Discussion
- Next Meeting

For more information, contact Daryl Howell at 515-281-8524.

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Iowa Fishing Report

www.iowadnr.gov

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Ice fishing reports are issued every other week while quality ice conditions exist. For current information on ice fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

Southeast

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 20: River stages on the Mississippi River are forecasted to stay stable throughout the week. Ice conditions have improved in some of the pools over the last week and fishing has picked up.

In **Pool 16**, there are reports of nice walleyes and sauger being caught by the Arsenal Dam on jigs and minnows. Ice fishing has picked up with good numbers of bluegills being caught in the backwaters on wax worms and powerbait. There are also reports of some crappies being caught along with some yellow perch. There is good ice in the marinas and backwater areas with now flow. Still **use caution** when entering backwater areas.

In **Pool 17**, there are some walleyes and saugers being caught on jigs and minnows but fishing has been slow. Ice fishing has been slow due to **poor ice conditions** at the Big Timber backwater complex. In **Pool 18**, a few walleyes and saugers are being caught below the dam on jigs and minnows. There are no reports for ice fishing due to **poor ice conditions**. Ice fishing around Rabbit Island in **Pool 19** has been good for bluegills on wax worms. **Pool 20** has no fishing report.

Lake Darling (Washington): Starting to get back to 3 to 4 inches of ice. Several thin spots still exist where the creeks have brought snow melt into the lake. Not much ice fishing has occurred yet because of the ice conditions.

Lake Geode (Henry): Most of the lake is ice free. The only ice is from the concession stand on up.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): Anglers have been catching crappies in the trees along the creek channel out from the south boat ramp. Ice fishing jigs tipped with wax worms are what they are using. Ice is about 3 to 4 inches thick but it is not the best quality.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Anglers are reporting 4 inches of ice in the coves and bays, particularly Honey Creek and Buck Creek. **The main lake does not have enough ice to support anglers.**

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Anglers have been catching bluegills and crappies with small jigs tipped with a wax worm. There is approximately 5 inches of ice.

Lake Wapello (Davis): There is not currently ice thick enough to support ice anglers.

County Ponds (Washington and Keokuk): Most of the smaller county owned ponds have about 4 to five inches of ice. Anglers are picking up some nice bluegills on a couple of them.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

Southwest

Don Williams (Boone): The lake has 6 to 8 inches of ice. Fishing is decent for bluegill and crappie around the structure with jigs tipped with wax worms.

Big Creek (Polk): The lake has 6 inches of ice. Walleyes are being caught at dusk on minnows in 30 to 40 feet of water, with sorting required for 15-inch fish. Crappies up to 10-1/2-inches are being caught fishing humps in the evening using small jigs tipped with a minnow or wax worm. Bluegills up to 9 inches are being caught fishing over the cedar tree piles on small jigs tipped with a wax worm or maggot. Lost Lake has been producing 6 to 8-inch bluegills.

Hickory Grove (Story): Bluegills up to 8 inches are being caught fishing over brush piles using small jigs tipped with a wax worm.

Ahquabi (Warren): Ice thickness is questionable. We have received reports that there is still open water in some places.

Ft. Des Moines (Polk): There is about 5 inches of ice. Some nice bluegills up to 9 inches have been caught on wax worms.

Robert's Creek (Marion): There is 5 to 6 inches of ice. Small bluegills and crappie are being caught on wax worms.

Banner Lake (Warren): There is 4 to 6 inches of ice. Trout are biting through the ice on pieces of night crawlers and wax worms.

Contact Ben Dodd (515) 432-2823, Ext.108, for information on the above area lakes.

Fogle Lake (Ringgold): Ice thickness varies, but is usually from 4 to 6 inches. Anglers are catching several bluegills on wax worms around the brush piles.

Twelve Mile (Union): Ice thickness varies widely and is usually from 3 to 6 ½ inches. Anglers are catching some nice bluegills and walleyes.

Three Mile (Union): Ice thickness varies widely and is usually from open water to 6 inches. Some bluegill and crappie are being caught from the creek channel edges and deeper trees.

Icaria (Adams): Ice thickness varies widely from open water to 6 inches. Some walleye and bluegills are being caught from the old road bed at mid-lake.

Farm Ponds: Ice can be up to 7 inches thick, but it varies.

Contact Gary Sobotka (641) 464-3108 for information on the above area lakes.

Ice conditions have been reported as favorable in most areas, although there have been some weaker areas due to waterfowl. Check ice conditions frequently and be aware of potential weak ice. Ice conditions remain variable, from 8 inches of ice on the farm ponds to 5 to 7 inches on small lakes.

Nodaway Lake (Adair): No Report

Morman Trail (Adair): No report

Greenfield Lake (Adair): Bluegill and crappie have been slow. Try small jigs tipped with wax worm or minnows around deep structure.

Meadow Lake (Adair): Bluegills are fair around deep structure. Crappie is slow.

Anita (Cass): Bluegill and crappie are slow.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): Crappie fishing has been excellent with good numbers of 9 to 12-inch fish being caught on jigs and minnows. A few walleyes are being caught on larger minnows on the south side of the lake. Manawa has 6 inches of ice.

Willow Lake (Harrison): No Report

Prairie Rose (Shelby): No Report

Southwest Iowa Farm Ponds: The best fishing reports have been from privately owned small ponds for bluegill and in the larger ponds, crappie, using teardrops tipped with wax worm. Ice thickness is 8 inches.

Contact Bryan Hayes (712) 769-2587 for information on the above area lakes.

For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the SW Regional Office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

Northwest

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing has been good fishing in 10 to 15 feet of water at Reed's Run, Templar and Buffalo Run. The evenings and mornings has produced fish of all size ranges. There is a 17 to 22-inch slot limit for walleyes on Spirit Lake. Perch fishing is good in Angler's Bay, but sorting is required for keeper sized fish. Bluegill fishing is good on the Grade and in Angler's Bay using wax worms. Crappie fishing is good in Templar lagoon.

West Okoboji (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is fair in Smith's Bay. Bluegill fishing is good in Smith's Bay, Little Emerson and the canals using wax worms. A few yellow perch are being caught in Smith's Bay. Crappie fishing is good in the canals for 8 to 11-inch fish.

Minnewashta (Dickinson): A few walleyes and yellow perch are being caught on the south side.

Silver Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is good, but a lot of sorting is required.

Center Lake (Dickinson): Small walleyes are being caught on the south end of the lake

Crawford Creek Lake (Ida): Fishing is good for 8 to 9-inch bluegills and an occasional perch. Tear drops and wax worms have been working best in 15 feet of water.

Arrowhead Lake (Sac): Fishing is fair to good for 8-inch bluegills.

Storm Lake (Buena Vista): Walleye fishing is sporadic, but a few fish are still being caught. Don't forget the 17 to 22-inch protected slot limit for walleyes on Storm Lake. All fish in this range must be released.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Ice depth is running 11 to 15 inches. Walleye fishing has been good. Walleye are hitting the best at the sunrise and sunset periods. Fishing in

10 feet of water or greater usually provides the best action. Minnows and jigging spoons are the best techniques. Remember Clear Lake has a 14 inch minimum length on walleye with only one of the fish over 22 inches and a daily limit of three. A few yellow bass are hitting, but catches of large numbers have been rare.

Fin and Feather (Cerro Gordo): Crappie and bluegill are being caught on the north end of the pond.

Maynes Grove (Franklin): Ice depths are in the 6 inch range. Anglers are catching crappie in the mornings. Small ice jigs and minnows are the best baits.

Interstate Park Lake (Franklin): Crappie, perch, and bluegill are hitting small ice jigs tipped with wax worms and minnows. Most fish are on the small side, but acceptable fish are being caught.

Brushy Creek (Webster): Anglers are catching some nice bluegills at the north end of the lake, with some sorting required. Some nice crappies have been caught too. Be careful on the ice, ice thickness varies though out the lake.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: Fishing on Mississippi River Pools 9 to 11 has been decent, for mid winter ice fishing. Reports range from poor to very good fishing with most anglers using a simple teardrop type lure with wax worms. The best time for the bite is called the "magic hour" and is right before dark starting about 4 pm.

In **Pool 9**, close to New Albin, bluegills and crappie fishing is fair to good at times by **Indian Lake** and **Cordwood Lake**. No reports from **Fish Lake** or **Bear Paw**, but both are traditionally good fisheries. Some smaller bluegills are reported from upper Shore Slough, closer to Lansing. Just south of Lansing in the **Village Creek** boat launch area, anglers are sorting mainly bluegill. Anglers should know the construction is finished in the boat launch and the entire area is open for fishing.

In **Pool 10**, fishing south of McGregor in the **Sny Magill** area has been good at times. Ice Lake, just south of **Norwegian Lake**, has been fair to good for crappies and bluegills. Norwegian Lake has been mainly slow, but a few anglers are reporting good catches of bluegills. **Sand Bar Lake** on the eastern part of the Sny Magill complex has many smaller bluegills biting and much sorting has taken place. On the Wisconsin side, **Pickarel Lake**, south of Prairie Du Chien, has been good for bluegills.

In **Pool 11**, the tailwater area is open for fishing at both Guttenberg and Lynxville, Wis. (Pool 10). The Guttenberg tailwater has very limited access below the DNR fish hatchery and aquarium. DNR staff is keeping the ice open for boat launching but cooler temperatures may freeze the harbor in. Lock and Dam construction will narrow the already limited parking at Guttenberg. If construction is underway or the parking full, please park on the side streets of town. Sauger fishing in the tailwaters has been fair but limits are hard to come by. Anglers are generally using jigs and minnow combinations.

On **lower Pool 11**, **Mud Lake** and **Zollicoffers Lake** have been fair for ice fishing with much sorting for larger bluegills. The harbor area just out from the Mud Lake county boat ramp offers quick access fishing for those short on time. If you want a longer walk, Zollicoffers area south of Mud Lake is the answer. On the other side of lower Pool 11, you can access **Sunfish Lake**. Fishing at Sunfish has been good but anglers need to move around to find fish. The fishery at Sunfish Lake may be new to

many Iowa anglers due to the recent habitat project there and its growing fishery. Anglers wanting to drive to Mud Lake from Dubuque can drive across the Wisconsin Bridge into Wisconsin and take Badger exit to the north. After a few blocks take a left off Badger Road and this will bring you to lower Pool 11 where the Wisconsin DNR maintains a boat ramp. You can fish O'Leary's Lake on Upper Pool 12, which is just south of the boat launch or walk north about a half mile across Lower Pool 11 to get to Sunfish Lake.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Fishing is good for 7 to 8-inch bluegills using a small wax worm on an ice jig.

Trout streams are open and have very clear water for fishing.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

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